

## **135-5-.06 Marriage and Family Therapists. Amended.**

### **(1) Definitions:**

(a) Approved Practicum or Internship Program means supervised experience obtained while enrolled in graduate level courses designated as a practicum or internship at an educational institution which, at the time, was accredited by a regional body recognized by the Council on Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA).

(b) Board Approved Graduate Level Course means a course in Marriage and Family Studies, Marriage and Family Therapy, or Marriage and Family Therapy Ethics which is offered by a training institute, is comparable to a graduate level course offered by an accredited educational institution, and has received prior approval by the Board. To obtain such approval, the training institute shall submit a course outline, a reading list, a bibliography, a curriculum vita for each instructor, and the required fee to the Board. Applications must include evidence that: the course content is organized around at least one major accepted comprehensive book and additional ancillary readings; the readings represent the current state of thinking in the field of marriage and family therapy and are of a depth comparable to a graduate level course; the course includes a minimum of 45 hours of classroom instruction; the course includes at least one comprehensive examination on which students must achieve a score of 80% or better in order to receive credit; and the instructor is licensed as either a marriage and family therapist, professional counselor, clinical social worker, psychologist, or psychiatrist, demonstrates specific training in the field of marriage and family therapy, and has at least five years post licensure experience in the practice of marriage and family therapy. Such approval shall be for a period of three years, and shall expire unless renewed prior to the end of that period.

(c) Board Approved Marriage and Family Therapy Supervisor means a person who is licensed as a marriage and family therapist and who has been approved by the Georgia Composite Board of Professional Counselors, Social Workers and Marriage and Family Therapists to provide supervision of the practice of marriage and family therapy. To obtain such approval the person shall submit documentation of the following: five years of full-time post-licensure experience in the practice of marriage and family therapy; 180 hours of experience providing marriage and family therapy supervision for at least two supervisees during a period of no less than two years and no more than five years; 36 hours of supervision received from an American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy Approved Supervisor or a Georgia Board Approved Marriage and Family Therapy Supervisor, specifically in the skill of providing marriage and family therapy supervision, a minimum of 24 hours of which shall have been individual supervision-of-supervision; and a recommendation from each of the supervisors who provided supervision-of-supervision attesting to the applicant's competence as a supervisor. In addition, the Board may, at its discretion, accept a supervisor who is licensed as a Marriage and Family Therapist in another jurisdiction and who has been designated an Approved Marriage and Family Therapy Supervisor by the Board that licenses Marriage and Family Therapists in that jurisdiction.

(d) Contract for Post-Graduate Experience and Supervision means a statement on forms provided by the Board, made by a person who has completed one of the degree programs required for licensure as either an associate marriage and family therapist or a marriage and family therapist, specifying that person's plan for obtaining the remaining experience and supervision required for licensure as a marriage and family therapist. Such a statement, once reviewed and approved by the Board, shall be considered a registered contract. A registered contract may be amended, so long as any changes have been approved by the Board.

(e) Course in Clinical Content Area means a graduate level course in the etiology, dynamics, evaluation, assessment, or treatment of emotional or behavioral problems and conditions.

(f) Course in Marriage and Family Studies means a graduate level course in the principles, concepts or history of marriage and family life, family systems, family relations and family development.

(g) Course in Marriage and Family Therapy means a graduate level course in the theory and practice of various treatment modalities in marriage and family therapy.

(h) Course in Marriage and Family Therapy Ethics means a graduate level course in professional ethics, legal responsibilities and liabilities, standards of practice, licensure regulation, and professional socialization relevant to the practice of marriage and family therapy.

(i) Direct Clinical Experience means time spent in client contact as therapist or cotherapist, in supervision, in case staffing, or in case consultation.

(j) Direction means ongoing oversight by an employer or superior of the work of a person practicing professional counseling, social work or marriage and family therapy. The director shall be responsible for assuring the quality of services rendered by that practitioner, and shall ensure that qualified supervision or intervention occurs in situations which require expertise beyond that of the practitioner. In order to be acceptable to the Marriage and Family Therapy Standards Committee of the Board, a director must attest to having performed the functions specified in this paragraph, and when not an employer must have entered into a contractual agreement with the practitioner to perform these functions.

(k) Full-time Experience means a minimum of 20 hours per week spent in direct clinical experience.

(l) Group Supervision means a maximum of six supervisees meeting with one supervisor.

(m) Individual Supervision means a maximum of two supervisees meeting with one supervisor.

(n) One Year means twelve months, or any periods of time which sum to twelve months.

(o) Practice of Marriage and Family Therapy means evaluating and treating emotional and mental problems and conditions, whether cognitive, affective or behavioral, resolving intrapersonal and interpersonal conflicts, and changing perception, attitudes and behavior; all within the context of marital and family systems. Marriage and family therapy includes, without being limited to, individual, group, couple, sexual, family and divorce therapy. Marriage and family therapy involves an applied understanding of the dynamics of marital and family therapy systems, including individual psychodynamics, the use of assessment instruments that evaluate marital and family functioning, designing and recommending a course of treatment, and the use of psychotherapy and counseling.

(p) Supervision means the direct clinical review for the purpose of training or teaching, by a supervisor of the interactions with clients of a person practicing professional counseling, social work or marriage and family therapy. Supervision may include, without being limited to, the review of case presentations, audio tapes, video tapes, and direct observation in order to promote the development of the practitioner's clinical skills. Both supervisors and supervisees are required to maintain a contemporaneous record of the date, duration, type (individual, paired, or group), and a brief summary of the pertinent activity for each supervision session to be submitted to the Board upon request. If there are any discrepancies in hours, contemporaneous documentation of supervision will be requested.

(2) An applicant who holds a current license as an **Associate Marriage and Family Therapist** must meet the following requirements for licensure as a marriage and family therapist:

(a) Experience. The applicant must document two years of fulltime post-master's experience or its equivalent, under direction and supervision:

1. Such experience shall have been in the practice of marriage and family therapy and shall include a minimum of 2,000 hours of direct clinical experience.

2. For applicants who have worked less than full-time, equivalent experience may be accrued over a total of not less than two years and not more than five years.

(b) Supervision. The applicant must have obtained 100 hours of supervision; concurrent with his/her documented experience.

1. Such supervision shall have been provided by a licensed marriage and family therapist, professional counselor, clinical social worker, psychiatrist or psychologist; and,

2. A minimum of 50 of these 100 hours must have been in individual supervision and a maximum of 50 of these 100 hours may have been in group supervision.

(c) Examination Waived. The applicant is not required to re-take the Examination in Marriage and Family Therapy following Board approval of his/her application for licensure as a marriage and family therapist.

(3) An applicant who holds a **Master's Degree** and does not have an active Associate Marriage and Family Therapist (AMFT) license must meet the following requirements for licensure as a marriage and family therapist:

(a) Education. The applicant must have earned a master's degree in marriage and family therapy, counseling, social work, medicine, applied psychology, psychiatric nursing, pastoral counseling, applied child and family development, applied sociology, or from any program accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education. Such degree shall be from an educational institution which, at the time the degree was awarded, was accredited by a regional body recognized by the Council on Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA).

1. For the purpose of licensure under this rule, a degree in psychology, child and family development or sociology shall be considered an applied degree and a degree in divinity or in theology shall be considered a degree in pastoral counseling, if the applicant has completed, as part of the degree program or as additional post-master's coursework, either of the following two options:

(i) three courses in clinical content areas; or

(ii) two courses in clinical content areas, plus an approved practicum or internship, which shall include a minimum of 500 hours of direct clinical experience in the practice of professional counseling, clinical social work or marriage and family therapy. The coursework required under this section shall be in addition to the five courses required in 2 below.

2. The applicant shall have completed, as part of the degree program or as additional post-master's coursework, at least two courses in Marriage and Family Therapy, two courses in Marriage and Family Studies, and one course in Marriage and Family Therapy Ethics. These courses shall have been obtained from an educational institution accredited by a regional body recognized by the Council on Higher Education Accreditation or from a training institute which offers Board approved graduate level courses.

3. A person who has completed one of the required master's degrees with the intention of pursuing licensure as a marriage and family therapist may, but is not required to, register a contract for post-graduate experience and supervision with the Board.

(b) Experience. The applicant must document three years of fulltime post-master's experience or its equivalent, under direction and supervision, which shall include a minimum of 2,500 hours of direct clinical experience.

1. One year of such experience may have been in an approved practicum before or after the granting of the master's degree, which shall include a minimum of 500 hours of direct clinical experience in the practice of professional counseling, clinical social work or marriage and family therapy.

2. At least two years of such experience shall have been in the practice of marriage and family therapy, which shall include a minimum of 2,000 hours of direct clinical experience.

3. For applicants who have worked less than full-time, equivalent experience may be accrued over a total of not less than three years and not more than five years.

(c) Supervision. The applicant must have obtained 200 hours of supervision, concurrent with his/her documented experience.

1. Such supervision shall have been provided by a licensed marriage and family therapist, professional counselor, clinical social worker, psychiatrist or psychologist.

2. At least 100 hours of such supervision shall have been provided by an American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy Approved Supervisor, a Georgia Board Approved Marriage and Family Therapy Supervisor, or a person who was receiving supervision-of supervision in order to qualify for either designation. A minimum of 50 of these 100 hours must have been in individual supervision and a maximum of 50 of these 100 hours may have been in group supervision.

3. Up to 100 hours of such supervision may have been obtained during an approved practicum before or after the granting of the master's degree.

(4) An applicant who holds a **Doctoral Degree** must meet the following requirements for licensure as a marriage and family therapist.

(a) Education. The applicant must have earned a doctoral degree in marriage and family therapy, counseling, social work, medicine, applied psychology, psychiatric nursing, pastoral counseling, applied child and family development, applied sociology, or from any program accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education. Such degree shall be from an educational institution which, at the time the degree was awarded, was accredited by a regional body recognized by the Council on Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA).

1. For the purpose of licensure under this rule, a degree in psychology, child and family development or sociology shall be considered an applied degree and a degree in divinity or in theology shall be considered a degree in pastoral counseling, if the applicant has completed, as part of the degree program or as additional post-doctoral coursework, either of the following two options:

- (i) three courses in clinical content areas; or

(ii) two courses in clinical content areas, plus an approved practicum or internship, which shall include a minimum of 500 hours of direct clinical experience in the practice of professional counseling, clinical social work or marriage and family therapy. The coursework required under this section shall be in addition to the five courses required in 2 below.

2. The applicant shall have completed, as part of a master's or doctoral degree program, or as additional post-graduate degree coursework, at least two courses in Marriage and Family Therapy, two courses in Marriage and Family Studies, and one course in Marriage and Family Therapy Ethics. These courses shall have been obtained from an educational institution accredited by a regional body recognized by the Council on Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) or from a training institute which offers Board approved graduate level courses.

3. A person who has completed one of the required doctoral degrees with the intention of pursuing licensure as a marriage and family therapist may, but is not required to, register a contract for post-graduate experience and supervision with the Board.

(b) Experience. The applicant must document two years of fulltime post-master's or post doctorate experience in the practice of marriage and family therapy, under direction and supervision, which shall include a minimum of 1,500 hours of direct clinical experience.

1. One year of such experience may have been in an approved internship program before or after the granting of the doctoral degree, which shall include a minimum of 500 hours of direct clinical experience.

2. At least one year of such experience shall have been full-time post-master's or post doctorate experience, which shall include a minimum of 1,000 hours of direct clinical experience.

(c) Supervision. The applicant must have obtained 100 hours of supervision, concurrent with their documented experience.

1. Such supervision shall have been provided by a licensed marriage and family therapist, professional counselor, clinical social worker, psychiatrist or psychologist, who was also an American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy Approved Supervisor, a Georgia Board Approved Marriage and Family Therapy Supervisor, or a person who was receiving supervision-of-supervision in order to qualify for either designation.

2. A maximum of 50 of these 100 hours may have been obtained during the applicant's doctoral degree or internship program.

3. A minimum of 50 of these 100 hours must have been in individual supervision and a maximum of 50 of these 100 hours may have been in group supervision.